

NOV 1 1962

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-00001R000100230011-0

CPYRGHT

Shabby Deal For Cuba Invasion Planner Told

Exclusive From
Hearst Headline Service

BY DAVID SENTNER
Chief, Hearst Headline Service
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31. — The shabby deal received by the late Ambassador Whiting Willauer in being removed as the top planner and air cover advocate of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was revealed today from released secret congressional committee testimony.

The poignant story of the summary ousting of Willauer which contributed to his death from a broken heart, according to his friends, was first disclosed by this correspondent a month ago.

THE FAILURE of bureaucracy to heed Willauer's warning that Castro was playing the communist game and his expert insight for a successful invasion of Red Cuba had much to do with the creation of the grim Cuban crisis.

Willauer, former ambassador to Costa Rica and Honduras, was appointed Assistant Secretary of State by President Eisenhower on December 11, 1960, to brain-trust the Cuban invasion plan. He died before the Senate Intelligence Subcommittee on Administrative Session as follows:

THAT IF THE invasion effort had been commenced at least nine months earlier with the known intelligence estimate that Castro had turned communist, had been made available to the President and higher echelons, the invasion would have had at least a 50 percent better chance than it did.

That in checking on the original invasion plan to be run by the Cubans but backed by the CIA, he felt "one of the great weaknesses of the plan was the lack of provision of top air cover for the low level strafing missions of B-26 bombers which were supposed to carry out the beachhead."

"I felt that top level cover should come from jets," Willauer added.

Then came in the new Kennedy administration and his mission as "senior partner with the CIA" in developing the invasion was confirmed.

Willauer testified he felt that his ideas had reached a point where they had to be put on paper and to firm up what he thought should be done regarding the Cuban invasion.

HE ATTEMPTED to arrange an appointment with appropriate officials in the CIA but they all claimed to be out of town and his opposite number in the CIA, Tracy Barnes, said, "we can't talk to you any more. We can only talk to other people."

He presumably meant A. A. Berle Jr., and Chester Bowles, high state department officials.

Willauer testified he tried to get an appointment with Bowles.

"I tried for 30 days straight," Willauer continued. "I called his secretary every day, or went up to see her. I saw him twice in the hall. He said, 'I am awfully busy, I will see you later.'"

But he never did.

WILLAUER'S impressive record in the war and in public service was put in the testimony: Formation of General Chennault's Flying Tigers, organizing the air transport for UNRRA and ECA in the Far East, pioneering the hump air route from India to China, masterminding guerilla operations against the Japanese and the Chinese communists, licensed pilot with more than 3,000 hours in the air, commendation for risking life in rescue work while ambassador to Honduras, coordinator of Admiral Byrd's second Antarctic expedition, and a long listing of top government posts.

Senator Dodd, D-Conn., subcommittee chairman told Willauer:

"When I say you were treated shabbily, I mean you were treated shabbily."

FOIAb3b

CPYRGHT

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-00001R000100230011-0